The Lacolle Centre

for educational innovation

Loyola Campus,
Concordia University

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSES AND GOALS

The Lacolle Centre for Educational Innovation is an off-campus residential facility located forty miles south of Montreal near Lacolle, Quebec.

It was developed by Loyola College in 1971, with the stated purpose of *extending the university experience by replacing some of the usual restrictions of a classroom with an informal, shared community.*

This environment is designed to promote the development and understanding of relationships among people, as well as provide an opportunity to explore new and creative approaches to learning. The primary goal of the centre is to insure that its users will, by working collaboratively at Lacolle, discover ways to enhance their educational pursuits on the university campus.

The Centre has four specific objectives:

Educational: To be used as a resource for *developing and testing innovations in higher education* which may enrich the quality of teaching and learning on the university campus.

Individual: To provide an environment in which individuals can *define and develop their personal resources* in order to enhance their learning.

Group: To emphasize the importance of the *human relations* component of learning and to encourage its development through *interaction* in an informal setting.

Community and Organization: To provide a vehicle through which organizational and classroom groups may *improve their ability to function effectively* both on their own and as part of the total university community.

The Kitchen and Dining Room have been the setting for many good meals.

THE FACILITY

The hundred and fifty year old yellow farmhouse, once called the 'Manor House of Lacolle', is an imposing wooden structure with a field stone wing, occupying twenty acres of lawn and natural woodlot about four miles southwest of Lacolle Village.

It accommodates twenty-four people comfortably overnight in four bedrooms furnished with bunk-beds, dressers and closets. There are also two small-group meeting rooms (for approximately fifteen) on the first floor (each of which may be used as a separate sleeping space), and an upstairs lounge.

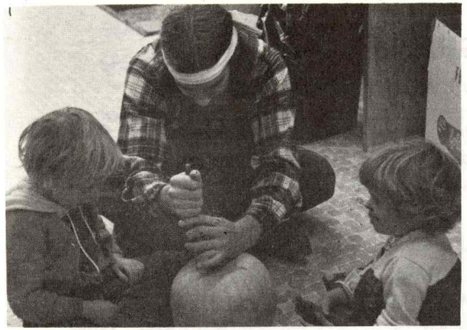
The 'stone room' which was designed as a large-group meeting area (for approximately forty) is carpeted and furnished with comfortable chairs, a black-board, large work-tables and a fireplace.

The kitchen and adjoining dining room are fully equipped. There are three bathrooms with showers, as well as a heated back room with running water, useable year-round as a laboratory or workshop.

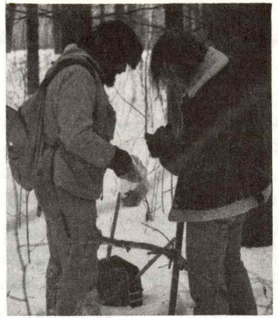
The Centre also provides for recreation. Available to the user are soccer and footballs, board games and playing cards; and we will supply, upon request, a complete stereo unit, a tape-recorder and/or a slide projector.

Although we supply dishtowels, there is no linen service, therefore users are asked to bring sleeping bags or blankets, and their own bathtowels and facecloths.

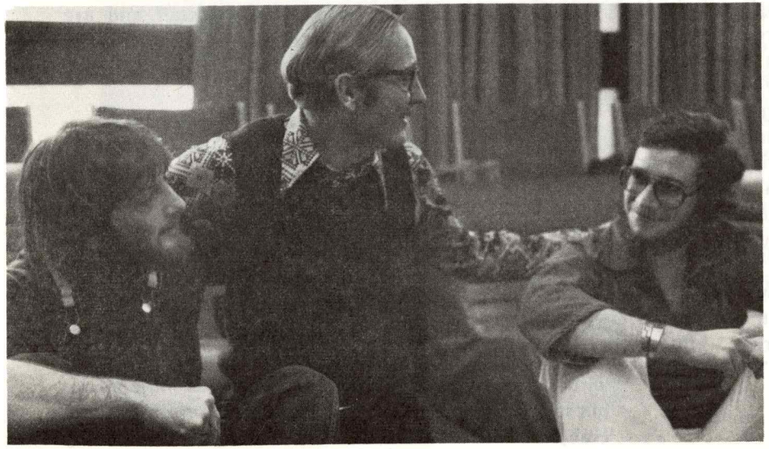
A map with directions to the centre and the house keys are provided prior to a group's departure for Lacolle.



The 'Great Pumpkin' at Festival Lacolle, 1975.



John Robinson and Paul Widden collecting soil samples.



Clark Moustakas during on-campus workshop exploring death and loneliness.

Feminist Lois Philips during on-campus program 'Under the Influence'.

PAST AND POTENTIAL PROGRAMS

The Lacolle Centre has been conceived as a resource for individuals and groups in the university community.

Each program is designed by the user group on its own, or with the help of the Lacolle staff, to meet the unique needs of the individuals involved. There are, however, several general areas into which some of the past programs fall:

Professor and student initiated programs:

A classroom groups spends a weekend or several weekdays at Lacolle in a relaxed atmosphere which extends the time and space of the classroom setting. This type of program might involve a *deeper exploration* into previously introduced course material; an opportunity to *apply teaching methodologies* (i.e. role play, drama, games, simulations, etc.) which may not be as well-suited to the classroom environment; or simply an unstructured period of time in which both instructors and students are able to *establish a comfortable working relationship* which may then carry over into their classroom experience.

The Centre has been used successfully in this way by almost every university department on the Loyola campus, including English, Commerce, Library Science, Communication Arts, French, Theatre Arts and Biology.

Residential courses:

These are regular credit courses which are taught in a concentrated period of time at Lacolle rather than over an extended period at the university. Examples have included summer courses in Biology (ecology) and astronomy.

Organizational use:

Students, Faculty and Administrative groups as well as total departments use the Centre for program planning, evaluation, problem solving and team building.

Lacolle initiated programs:

These are planned by the Lacolle staff and are advertised and open to all members of the university and surrounding Montreal community. In the past they have included such events as:

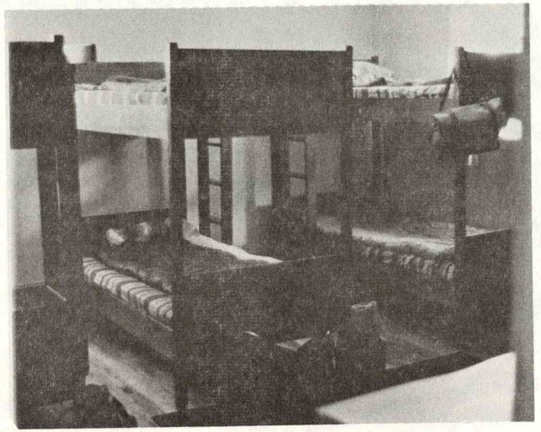
- an annual harvest festival in October
- life and career planning weekends
- training in leadership and communication skills
- a seminar in 'self-directed learning'
- a program exploring 'alternative lifestyles'
- several week-long instructional improvement workshops for Faculty members.

In addition, Lacolle has sponsored or co-sponsored several successful *on-campus events,* including a week with Lois Philips examining feminism as humanism; guest appearances by such prominent authors as John Holt, Clark Moustakas, and R.D. Laing; and a ten day seminar exploring creative approaches to dealing with death and loneliness.

Outside groups:

Groups which are not affiliated with the university have rented the facility for a nominal fee to conduct programs in such areas as: Gestalt methodologies, Transactional Analysis and Organization Development.

*** Potential programs at the Centre are limited only by the imagination and resourcefulness of its users. Creative suggestions for use of weekdays are particularly welcome, as mid-week time slots are usually more available than weekends, especially during the school term. ***



Comfortable sleeping quarters at Lacolle.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE LACOLLE CENTRE

Organizational assistance in planning menus as well as help in arranging transportation to and from the Centre, publicizing programs and obtaining professional resource persons as consultants or facilitators.

Members of the Lacolle staff and associates are available to accompany groups to the Centre and to provide skills in the areas of problem solving and decision making, group leadership, conflict management, goal setting and interpersonal or intergroup communication. In addition, we are available for consultation to groups or individuals on-campus who would like assistance in any of these areas.

On-campus help in scheduling, designing and evaluating programs to take place at the Centre.

Provision of written information concerning the Centre; registration and evaluation forms; recipe suggestions and quantity guides for menu planning; printed suggestions for games, exercises and other group activities which may be conducted at Lacolle; and a list of alternative facilities similar to Lacolle, should the Centre not be available at the time requested.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE USE OF LACOLLE CENTRE

GENERAL: The phone number at the Centre is 514-246-3461. Participants who call from that number are asked to call or to bill their home phone number.

TRANSPORTATION: A map is available for those planning to drive. The Centre is located on the United States border, on Quebec Highway 217, just one mile from the last exit on Route 15 South towards Plattsburgh, New York.

FOOD AND ACCOMMODATIONS: Food costs are approximately $5.00 per person per day. Planning and preparation of meals is the shared responsibility of group members.

The Centre has twenty-four bunk beds in four upstairs bedrooms, with room for four to six additional persons downstairs. Linen and blankets are not provided, so participants should bring at least two blankets or a sleeping bag along with their own towels, soap and washcloths.

RECREATION: Lacolle Centre is surrounded by twenty acres of grass and woodlot, with trails for cross-country skiing. There is also a pond nearby which may be used for swimming in the summer and skating during the winter months.

A complete sound system may be borrowed through our on-campus office, and some games and sports equipment are available at the Centre. Participants are urged to bring musical instruments, records and tapes, etc. to share with others.

LACOLLE CENTRE STAFF AND ORGANIZATION

The Centre functions under the auspices of a fifteen-member council comprised of students, staff and faculty representatives, and chaired on a rotating basis for a term of two years.

This body is responsible to the Vice-Rector and Principal of Loyola Campus, and sets the general policies and goals for the Centre during regular council committee meetings.

The operational direction is provided by Marilyn Callan, Coordinator, and Linda Allan, Office manager, who together ensure the overall smooth functioning of the facility and its programs.

Linda

Marilyn

Linda Allan, Office Manager, brings to her position several years of experience with the Lacolle Centre. She is a Loyola graduate, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, and has been associated with the campus in a number of different capacities, including teaching at the Loyola Day Care Centre. For the past year she has been involved with helping to organize an alternative educational program which her son has been attending.

Linda's rural background gives her a particular affinity to the Lacolle facility, for the maintenance of which she is largely responsible.

Her interests lie in the fields of the humanities; human relations training and other areas of personal and interpersonal growth.

Marilyn Callan is Coordinator of Lacolle Centre and part-time faculty in the Sir George Williams Department of Applied Social Science.

Her degrees are from Macdonald College of McGill University (teaching certificate — 1967); Sir George Williams University (B.A. Sociology — 1971); and the Human Services Program at Goddard College (M.A. Social Psychology: Organizational Development — 1975). In addition, she is a graduate of the S.G.W. Centre for Human Relations and Community Studies Trainer Development Program (in small group process and leadership).

Her background includes seven years of teaching with the Lakeshore School Board; organizational and educational consultation; and assistant management of the staff training program at Ville Marie Social Service Centre in Montreal.

Her interests lie in the areas of adult education, staff and faculty inservice training, and organization functioning and renewal.

Professional affiliation is with the National Association for Public Continuing and Adult Education.

YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR FRIENDS ARE INVITED TO JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL HARVEST FESTIVAL OPEN HOUSE EACH YEAR ON THANKSGIVING WEEKEND, SO THAT YOU MAY SEE LACOLLE CENTRE FOR YOURSELF.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
VISIT US AT OUR LOYOLA OFFICE,
2492 WEST BROADWAY, MONTREAL;
OR CALL AT 482-0320, LOCALS 344 and 494.

Photos: Linda Allan & Jim Gore
Text: Marilyn Callan
Layout: Claire Tallarico & Bill Gilsdorf